tunity of trying my plans; and it was not till about two years and a half ago that I again turned my attention to the subject. Deeply impressed with the conviction of the vast importance to this nation that her labouring poor should possess homes fit for human beings to dwell in, it struck me that a system of constructing such buildings of hollow tube was practicable, and having expressed this opinion to the Duke of Richmond, whose architect I have the honour to be, his Grace desired me to send him my plans, which I did, accompanying them with a written statement of the advantage likely to accrue from the use of such a material, not only in building cottages, but in the erection of farm buildings, and suggesting that, as the cost of such works was thus, wherever clay existed on an estate, resolvable into labour and fuel, my plan of construction would afford a great amount of employment to the Irish poor, the result of whose labour thus directed would tend to raise them in the scale of civilised beings.

His grace, whose ear is ever open to any practicable plan of improving the condition of his poor neighbours, told me at once that he would give my scheme a trial, and that the tubes should be made at his tile-yard, and a cottage built with them. Mr. Webster, of Hounsdown, was kind enough to lend me one of his hand tile machines, and with one of them the tubes I employed were formed; some of them being 20 inches long and 7 inches square, weighing, in proportion to an equal cubical quantity of solid brick, about four-fifths less. It was part of my original purpose to form roofs, walls, floors, and partitions of these tubes; but in the first experiment the roof and walls only of the cottage were constructed; and as a piece of construction it answered admirably; but the form I then used I should not employ again, as the wet, not from any leakage, but owing to capillary attraction, finds its way in at the haunch of the arch,—a defect which I believe I can wholly obviate in my next essay. Mr. Rushidge, the duke's agent, who gave me every assistance in carrying out the work, prognosticated a failure in this point, and his judgment proved better than mine; still, as a first experiment, it must be considered a successful one, and I feel assured that it will be the commencement of a new era in the system of constructing cottages. Lord Robert Clinton, who was staying at Woodwood at the time, appeared much interested in the subject, and by his request I made a series of designs for cottages to be constructed with these tubes, which designs, and specimens of the tubes, he sent to the president of the Royal Agricultural Society in Ireland. I also called on Mr. Chadwick, and left him an essay of mine on the subject of cottage construction, and also gave him specimens of the bricks made at the Duke of Richmond's works. I am about to make experiments to determine the best forms for the various purposes to which these tubes are applicable, the result of which I shall be happy to communicate to you. Such a method of construction will be as durable as it is economical, and will thus remove one of the obstacles to a legislative measure which shall relieve from the cottages of this country the stigma of being nurseries of vice and pauperism.

Southampton, April 24. JOHN ELLIOTT.

City Commissioners of Sewers.—At a meeting of the Commissioners of Sewers, on Tuesday, Mr. Deputy Peacock in the chair, measures were taken to improve the condition of the carriage-way in Leadenhall-street. Several persons were fined for cesspool nuisances, and, in consequence of a report from the surveyor, a stricter rule as to the emptying of these into the sewers was ordered in future to be adopted. A conversation then ensued upon the position of the Great Central Gas Company, which was originated by a letter from the secretary. The communication stated that "this company's mains will be laid under the superintendence and control of the commissioners, and the directors are most anxious to acquire information on the mode of effecting these necessary operations in a manner which shall provide for the public convenience in the most ample manner." The letter was referred to the General Purposes Committee.

ARCHITECTURE AND THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

Sir,—Of four designs which I had sent to the Royal Academy for their exhibition, three have been rejected, and among them that which I had made myself sure of being accepted, it being by far the best in regard both to subject and execution—in the latter respect fully wrought up to *exhibition proof* as a drawing. I cannot help thinking, therefore, that great error as to selection has been shown by those with whom the selecting works for exhibition rests. Very probably the drawing which is admitted is so merely because it happens to fit in conveniently among others, and it is as likely as not that I shall find it where, being a small one, it can scarcely be seen at all.

Certain it is that at the Academy not even decent attention is paid to the arrangement of the architectural subjects, which was last year more than usually unsatisfactory, for while an interior of the new coffee-room at the Carlton club-house was hung in the topmost row, so that it was quite impossible to make any thing out of Mr. Sang's decorations, several very uninteresting subjects—some of them not designs at all, but merely views consisting of bits of ruins and trees—were placed just upon the line. There being at the best so very little space at the academy for hanging architectural drawings so as they can be properly seen, surely the least that can be done is to make the most judicious use of that space, and it is nothing less than preposterous to give up to oil pictures any part of "the line," as it is termed, or, indeed, any other situation where the larger architectural subjects would show themselves at least tolerably well. To the upper part of the walls being covered with oil pictures,—since, it seems, covered they must be,—there can be no particular objection, it being better that it should be so, than that, under the pretence of being exhibited, *designs* should be put out of sight.

What is the Professor of Architecture about, that he does not at least remonstrate? and, if such be really the case, give us to understand that he has no authority, and remonstrates to no purpose. At any rate, we architects look to you, Mr. Editor, for upholding, as far as may be in your power, the interests of architecture, by protesting against the slights and indignities put upon it at the Academy's exhibitions. It has been suggested before now, that it would be an improvement were there to be at least one screen for the reception of smaller architectural drawings. But as it seems screens must not be thought of,—perhaps because the Academy do not wish to appear to screen themselves either in that or any other way,—allow me to point out a different and still better mode by which so many drawings might be accommodated, that, perhaps, all the walls of what is now called the architectural-room might be given up to oil pictures. It is simply this: let there be in each room a long but narrow show-table or desk, with two sloping sides, upon which the drawings have merely to be placed, their frames resting against the ledge of such desk. Tables of the kind placed in the rooms, would be no more an obstruction than forms now are, therefore free from the inconvenience, or supposed inconvenience, attending screens, while, at the same time, they would be better for looking at the drawings placed on them.

There is, indeed, one thing which such plan would render necessary, viz., that the frames must not exceed in their upright dimensions the width of the sloping surfaces of the desk. That would be the only regulation required; for the frames—and perhaps mere narrow beadings, similar to those used for prints, would be better than "picture-frames"—might be wider or narrower, as might happen, and also shorter than the breadth of the slope on which they would be placed. Of course the necessary regulation must be properly announced to those whom it concerned. As matters are managed at present, it looks as if the Academy were anxious to get rid of architecture, not, indeed, by actually kicking it out of doors—for were they to do that, they might chance to get some hard kicks in return,—but by "bowing it out," in a sort of fashion which plainly tells a person that his speedy departure will be more agreeable than his stay.

It is a pity there cannot be an election for representatives of architecture in the academy,—for in that case I do not think that any of those who now sit for it would be returned; most assuredly not out of gratitude for their past services and zeal. Outis.

THE NEW SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER COLOURS.

The report of the Art-Union of London occupies so much of our space, that we can afford but little more in our present number to matters artistical. We must say, however, to those who through these proceedings have gained the right of selecting pictures, that they will find in the New Water Colour Gallery some charming works. Although there are, perhaps, fewer prominent pictures than usual, the whole are more evenly good than is sometimes the case. In the landscape department especially, there is a great improvement.

Mr. L. Haghe has a remarkably fine picture, "Vespers in the church of St. Anne, Bruges" (102); and Mr. H. Warren's "Joseph's Coat brought to Jacob" (276), displays some of the highest qualities of the art, and has narrowly escaped the epithet "grand." Mr. Edward Corbould's chief work "The Murderers of Thomas Chase, of Amersham, drawing up 'the Letter to the Clergy,'" displays a wonderful depth of colouring, and is in other respects a picture of great merit. Mr. Absolon, always excellent, is not quite up to his own mark in his nevertheless charming picture of harvesting, under the title of "Plenty" (55). Mr. Vacher has some beautiful views in Rome and Sicily.

Mr. Weigall has deserted his "poultry," and given a pleasing companion to his "Rape of the Lock" last year, called "Philandering."

Mr. Wehnert's "Precincts of a large City, Evening," is an agreeable and clever drawing, but we miss the more ambitious works he has been accustomed to exhibit. Mr. Fahey, Mr. Kearney, Mr. W. Lee, Mr. Davidson (for some nice green landscapes), Mr. Mole, Mr. Riviere, Mr. Howse, Mr. M'Kewan, Mr. Harrison Weir, Mr. Rowbotham, jun. (for a clever drawing of Rouen), Miss Fanny Corbaux, &c., should all be named.

LORD ROSSE'S SOIREE.

The new president of the Royal Society, the Earl of Rosse, gave his first *conversazione* on Saturday evening last, which was attended by a large number of persons. The president having no house in town, it was held in the suite of rooms occupied by the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries, in Somerset House. This change, from the private residence of the late president, Lord Northampton, is not by any means an improvement: it gives the entertainment the character simply of some special meeting of the society itself, and takes away the charm of a private reception. This feeling was increased by the circumstance that the Prince Albert, who was present, came early, and being necessarily attended round the rooms by the noble host, the latter could not personally receive his guests, so that it became simply a public assembly where a number of celebrities might be met.

In other respects the arrangements were the same as at Lord Northampton's.

Amongst the many interesting objects in the rooms were models of the president's colossal telescopes, a clever machine for cutting ship-timber, Mr. Whishaw's telegraphic arrangement for obtaining uniformity of time, a number of the best daguerreotypes we have yet seen, and some of Mr. Rogers's most recent carvings.

There was also an extraordinary and beautiful tryptych, painted at the commencement of the sixteenth century, and attributed to Lucas de Cranach. Cranach was the contemporary of Albert Dürer, and in some respects not inferior to him.

Progress of Literary and Scientific Institutions.—A return obtained by Mr. Scholfield, M.P., shows that applications have been received from upwards of 100 literary and scientific societies or institutions for certificates of exemption from local rates.

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